(b) 8.77 lakh bales of cotton were exported during the 1988-89 cotton season.

Appointment of SC/ST Directors in the Public Sector undertakings

966. SHRI ANAND PRAKASH GAUTAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) how many Executive Directors and other Directors are on the Board of S.T.C., M.M.T.C., P.E.C. and H.H.E.C. at present;

(b) how many of them belong to the scheduled Castes and Tribes respectively; and

(c) if there are no SC/ST directors in the above mentioned undertaking what steps Government propose to take to appoint at least one Executive Director belonging to SC/ST on each of the boards of the above undertakings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN): (a) Details of full-time and part-time Directors on the Boards of STC, MMTC, PEC and HHEC at present are as under:—

	STC	MMTC	PEC	HHEC
Full time	4	6	3	1
Part time	5	5	3	8

(b) **None.**

(c) For appointment of full-time Directors on the Boards of PSUs, the finalisation of panel of names is done by Public Enterprises Selection Board. At the time of making selections, PESB also considers eligible candidates belonging to SC and ST.

As regards part-time ex-officio Directors, such appointments are made by nominating only the officers dealing with the concerned subject.

utstanding Loans Advanced by Nationalised Banks to Cotton Growers of Andhra Pradesh

967. Dr. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount of outstanding loans advanced by the nationalised banks to the cotton growers in Guntur and Prakasam districts of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether any representations were received from the distressed cotton growers for debt relief; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and action taken by Government thereon?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that their data reporting system does not generate the information in the manner asked for.

(b) and (c) Government and Reserve Bank of India have been receiving various representations for providing relief to the cotton growers in Prakasam and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh. Government of India appointed a High Power Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. P. D. Ojha, Deputy Governor of RBI to look into the problems of cotton growers in these two districts. Based on the recommendations of the High Power Committee RBI had issued instructions in June 1988 to scheduled commercial banks for providing relief to cotton growers in Prakasam and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh Important relief measures recommended are:

(i) The banks as a special case, should defer recovery of principal as well as interest from the affected farmers for a period of two years

or till the next normal year whichever is earlier. This relief is to be extended on the merits of each case.

(ii) Banks should not charge penal interest nor should they compound the interest. Banks should also ensure that in the case of short term loans, the total interest payable by small and marginal farmers does not exceed the principal.

(iii) Banks should stop auctioning of gold ornaments pledged with them. Such action should be taken only as a last resort when all other avenues for recovery of dues have failed and that too after obtaining clearance from higher levels in each case.

(iv) Banks may extend consumption loan facilities upto Rs. 500/- per family.

(v) Banks should sanction loans for allied activities like dairy, poultry, etc. to the affected farmers when demanded.

Transfer of Office Bearers of Regional Rural Bank Employees Association

968. SHRI ASHIS SEN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for which the Chairman of Kapurthala-Ferozpur Kshetriya Gramin Bank issued transfer orders on the functonaries of the Association of the employees of the Bank soon after the formation of the Association which is a legitimate right of the employees; and

(b) what action Government propose to take against such unfair labour practice and restrain the Chairman of the Bank?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) The Chairman, Kapurthala-Ferozpur Kshetriya Gramin Bank has reported that the transfer of the emploees of the Bank including the functionaries of the staff union/association have been made purely on administrative grounds and for no other reasons.

(b) Does not arise.

Protection of Jute Industry

969. SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be please to state:

(a) what steps Government propose to take to protect the jute industry;

(b) what is the number of units producing synthetic packaging materails all over the country; and

(c) what is the number of workers and the amount of capital invests in such synthetic packaging industry?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) A statement indicating steps taken by the Government to protect the jute industry is enclosed. (*See* below)

(b) and (c) There are around 500 synthetic units spread all over the country. The industry provides employment to over 1,25,000 workers. The total investment in the industry is of the order of Rs. 400 crores.

Statement listing steps taken by Government to protect the Jute Industry

Government have recently provided several reliefs and incentives to jute industry. These are:

(i) Duty free import of raw jute against export of jute goods under the advance licencing scheme from April 1989 onward in order to make our jute goods internationally competitive.

(ii) Waiver of customs duty on import of a number of jute machi-